

A telegram from the New York City Central Labor Council dated April 11, 1967, sent by Harry Van Arsdale, President, Jay Rubin, Chairman of the Hospital and Medical Care Committee and Walter J. Sheerin, Coordinator, states that:

"The effect of this bill would be to outlaw corporations, now providing low-cost optometric services to the public and employees covered by union health and welfare plans.

"It would affect low-income workers and their families. And would not improve upon the quality of service. It is discriminating against group practice, which has proven successful and beneficial to millions of people in our state and would deny many of these people needed eye care while inflating costs."

In a communication dated April 11, 1967, Raymond R. Corbet, President of the New York State AFL-CIO stated:

"The result of this bill would be that these individual optometrists would corner the market on the sale of eyeglasses, thus driving up the cost of eye care for the public as well as increasing welfare and medicaid costs.

"For many years New Yorkers have benefited from group or corporate practice of optometry, which provide eye examinations by fully licensed and qualified optometrists and which are able to provide the necessary eyeglasses at reasonable price. Many union health and welfare plans have arrangements with such groups or corporations to provide glasses to their members and their families at low cost. Under this bill, group corporate practice of optometry would be prohibited.

"In addition, employees of presently existing corporations in the optical field, many of whom are union members, would suffer layoffs and unemployment. This bill would serve only the special interest of the private optometrist who would have his competition eliminated and thus be assured of greater profits."

A telegram dated April 11, 1967 from James Trenz, President, Local 463 IUE, AFL-CIO, states that:

"If this bill is signed eye-care and eyeglasses generally available to everyone at modest cost will be lost to many union health and welfare funds as well as to the public at large. We request you veto this bill as not in the public interest."

These statements are representative of those made by scores of unions and union leaders who are deeply concerned with the public welfare. These statements clearly reflect labors' position on the proposed legislation now before this subcommittee.

In the interest of the thousands of workers and members of the general public, I urge that the proposed legislation now before this subcommittee not be adopted.

Mr. SISK. The next witness is Mr. Galen E. Rowe, Jr., on behalf of the National Association of Optometrists and Opticians.

We will be glad to hear from you now, Dr. Rowe.

Are you a doctor?

Dr. ROWE. I am an optometrist, yes, sir.

Mr. SISK. Do we have a copy of your statement?

Dr. ROWE. I gave it to the Clerk of the Committee.

Mr. SISK. Again, in the interest of time, I would appreciate it, if you would conform as much as possible to the time allowance.

Dr. ROWE. If I could be assured that the prepared statement would, with some additional comments, be made a part of the record, I would forego the reading of my statement and submit it for the record.

Mr. SISK. Without objection, your entire statement will be made a part of the record, and of course, any of your oral remarks will also become a part of the record.

STATEMENT OF GALEN E. ROWE, JR., O.D., PRESIDENT, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS AND OPTICIANS

Dr. ROWE. Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I will forego the reading of this statement and will attempt to give some answers to some of the questions that have been raised by various members of the Subcommittee during the course of the testimony here.